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Message Text

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ACTION H-03

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FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8258

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANTIAGO 2083

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: OREP, CI
SUBJECT: STAFFDEL SCHNEIDER

REFS: SANTIAGO 2080, STATE 079752

SUMMARY: DESPITE INCONVENIENCE, GOC IN DESIRE TO EXHIBIT OPENNESS WILL GIVE DESIRED AUTHORIZATION TO SENATOR KENNEDY STAFFDEL SCHNEIDER TO VISIT DETAINEES. END SUMMARY

1. UNDER SEC FON RELATIONS CLAUDIO COLLADOS CALLED ME IN URGENTLY MIDDAY APRIL 19 TO DISCUSS STAFFDEL VISIT. HE SAID HISTORY OF INVITATION WAS THAT DURING UNGA LAST OCTOBER, FON MIN HUERTA HAD MET WITH SENATOR KENNEDY AND EXTENDED INVITATION. MUCH HAS HAPPENED SINCE INVITATION WAS EXTENDED AND SITUATION TODAY IS QUITE DIFFERENT, HE CONTINUED. NEVERTHELESS,EVEN THOUGH FONMIN'S INVITATION WAS PERSONAL ONE TO SENATOR KENNEDY AND EVEN THOUGH SO MUCH TIME HAD GONE BY, AND GOC HAD BEEN GIVEN VERY LITTLE ADVANCE NOTICE, GOC HAD DECIDED TO RECEIVE STAFFDEL AS REPRESENTATIVES OF SENATOR.

2. COLLADOS OBSERVED THAT TIMING OF VISIT CREATED CERTAIN PROBLEMS, IN SENSE THAT STAFFDEL WAS ASKING TO VISIT DETAINEES INCLUDING THOSE AT DAWSON ISLAND JUST WHEN GOC HAD ACTED TO DENY REQUESTS OF THIS NATURE, EVEN TO SUCH ORGANIZATIONS AS ICRC. NEVERTHELESS, DECISION HAD BEEN MADE TO ALLOW STAFFDEL TO MAKE VISITS TO PERSONS DESIRED, INCLUDING ALMEYDA AND LETELIER, AND TO HAVE PRIVATE INTERVIEWS WITH THEM AS STAFFDEL
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HAD REQUESTED. THEY COULD ALSO ATTEND CURRENT AIR FORCE TRIAL,

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AND WOULD HAVE MEETING WITH MEMBERS OF SUPREME COURT AS REQUESTED. COLLADOS HOPED THAT THIS OPENNESS ON PART OF GOC WOULD BE APPRECIATED BY ALL CONCERNED, ALTHOUGH HE RECOGNIZED THAT NO ONE COULD PREDICT WHAT STAFFDEL WOULD DO WITH INFORMATION ACQUIRED IN THIS FASHION OR WHAT INTENTIONS THEY MIGHT HAVE AFTER LEAVING CHILE.

3. STRESSING SPECIAL NATURE OF TREATMENT BEING ACCORDED TO STAFFDEL, COLLADOS VENTURED HOPE THAT FACILITIES GRANTED SENATOR KENNEDY'S REPRESENTATIVES WOULD NOT BE INTERPRETED IN ANY WAY AS CHILEAN INTERVENTION OR TAKING SIDES IN U.S. INTERNAL POLITICS. ALTHOUGH NATURALLY NOT OFFICIALLY INFORMED IN THIS RESPECT, COLLADOS CONTINUED, IT IS APPARENT THAT INTERNAL POLITICAL PROCESS UNDER WAY IN U.S. IN WHICH SENATOR KENNEDY PLAYING AN IMPORTANT ROLE.

4. I REPLIED THAT I WAS CONFIDENT DEPARTMENT WOULD BE PLEASED WITH DECISION TO RECEIVE STAFFDEL AND BE SO OPEN AND FORTH-COMING. I EXPRESSED HOPE THAT VISIT WOULD TURN OUT TO BE USEFUL IN TERMS OF UNDERSTANDING FOR CHILE IN U.S.

5. COMMENT: COLLADOS ALLOWED HINT OF PIQUE TO SHOW AT SHORTNESS OF NOTICE GIVEN TO GOC RE VISIT. HE MADE NO REFERENCE WHATEVER TO AN INVITATION FROM GENERAL PINOCHET OR TO CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN GENERAL PINOCHET AND SENATOR KENNEDY (CF. STATE 079752). THRUST OF HIS REMARKS ON "INTERVENTION" WAS CLEAR: CHILEANS REGARD THIS VISIT AS COMING PRETTY CLOSE TO THE LINE.
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